

Conference Call Transcript
11/18/03

Operator: Good afternoon. My name is Latasha, and I will be your conference facilitator today. At this time I would like to welcome everyone to the Neighborhood Networks November Call Establishing Safe Havens for Children: Creating Afterschool Program. All lines have been placed on mute to prevent any background noise. After the speaker's remarks, there will be a question and answer period. If you would like to ask a question during this time, simply press star, then the number 1 on your telephone keypad. If you would like to withdraw your question, press star, then the number 2 on your telephone keypad. Thank you. Ms. Schachter, you may begin your conference.

Ms. Schachter: Thank you, Latasha. Good afternoon and welcome to the Neighborhood Networks November Conference Call. This month's conference call is entitled "Establishing Safe Havens for Children: Creating Afterschool Programs." As we are all very well aware, afterschool programs are those programs and services that are highly valued by working parents. Many of our Neighborhood Networks centers are currently operating afterschool programs or planning to do so. To support that effort and to help those who are already offering afterschool programs, we designed today's conference call to provide a good bit of information as well as some resources and a firsthand experience from one of our Neighborhood Networks center directors. Our three speakers today are Jen Rinehart, associate director from the After School Alliance; Lynn Smarte, marketing coordinator of ED Pubs, and Terri Taylor, the administrator and center director for the Coleman-James Learning Center in Pasadena, California. Our first speaker will be Jen Rinehart.

Ms. Rinehart: Good afternoon everyone. This is Jen Rinehart, and I am the associate director of the Afterschool Alliance. It's really great to talk with you all today about afterschool programs and the critical role that they play in the lives of children and families and communities. And as Vickie mentioned, I know that many of you are providing opportunities for kids in the afterschool hours. And I wanted to start by thanking you for all that you do to support kids, by giving them options during the hours after school and before parents can get home from work. So there's a crucial gap there. We know that kids get out of school roughly around 3:00, but that often parents can't get home until 5 or 6. So that often leaves two or three hours in between when children go unsupervised. So

thanks for the work that you do to make sure that those children have options during those unsupervised hours. I just wanted to tell you a little bit about the Afterschool Alliance and what we do. We are a nonprofit organization dedicated to making sure that all kids have access to quality afterschool programs. We focus all of our work around our vision of afterschool for all by the year 2010, which is only a few short years away. So we have a lot of work to do. And that makes it all the more exciting to talk with you, to bring a new group of folks into the effort of ours and of our nation to really get services available for all children. The Alliance acts as a voice for afterschool in our efforts to increase the number of quality afterschool programs. We provide resources for afterschool programs. And for advocates working on behalf of afterschool programs, we encourage the development of local, state and national afterschool systems. And we engage public will to support afterschool. So those are some of our main areas of work.

I want to start just by running through a couple of statistics about why is afterschool important. So why are we spending so much time talking about afterschool? What's the big deal about these hours after the school day ends? The hours between 3 and 6 p.m. are the most dangerous. It's the time when drug use, juvenile crimes, becoming victims of crime, car crashes, teen pregnancy, the incidence of all these behaviors is highest during these hours on school days. More than 28 million children have either both parents or their only parent in the workforce and as many as 15 million children return home to empty houses after school each day. Nine in ten Americans think children need organized activities or places to go after school where they can be exposed to new learning opportunities. So we have this large, large number of children everyday who are going home after school and yet the American public, year after year in polling of American voters that the Alliance has done, says, "Look, we know kids need safe places to be after school. We support providing safe places and enriching learning and opportunities for kids. And in fact, we're willing to pay more in taxes to see that happen." And the number nine in ten is the number that's off the charts in terms of public polling. The polling firms that we work with say this is just a phenomenal number. And the fact that voters are willing to pay more in tax money is even more impressive. So that gives you some indication of how important this issue is to the American public.

More than half of American voters think there are not enough afterschool programs available for children today. And three-quarters are concerned that there will not be new programs and some existing programs will have to close their doors because of lack of funds. So the American public is concerned about funding for these programs, concerned about the ongoing availability of programs, not just that they start up for a year or two and then go away because the funding dries up. But that we find some way to fund programs over the long term. Researchers have found that middle school students who spend three or more hours home alone during the hours after school are significantly more likely to use drugs and alcohol. They have higher levels of stress and anger. They experience more depression, more behavior problems. They possess lower self-esteem and have lower academic performance. So all of these factors contribute to making a strong argument for providing afterschool for all children in America. So we know some of the factors that come into play in terms of deciding why we should have afterschool.

But what does the research tell us about the effectiveness of afterschool programs? We know from research that students are more engaged in learning. For example—and when I say that I don't just mean more engaged in learning during the afterschool hours, but more engaged in learning overall. For example, participants in a 4-H afterschool program in New York showed stronger motivation to achieve higher educational aspirations and improved social skills. So when you compare participants in the 4-H afterschool program to non-participants, the participants excel on all of those measures. Students reach higher levels of academic achievements. In the San Francisco Beacons afterschool program, regular participants in the program improved their math and reading scores on standardized tests. That's just one example. There are a lot of other examples from programs all across the country that shows increased academic achievement on the part of participants.

We know that afterschool can help level the playing field. This is a great concern to those of us who are working on behalf of afterschool for all kids, is that in some of our more affluent communities, afterschool is a given or afterschool isn't as much of a concern because there aren't as many dual income households and where one parent can be home during the afterschool hours. So we're particularly concerned about the households where both

parents have to work just to make a living and that they don't have other options for their kid during the afterschool hours. So we've looked at research that shows that afterschool can indeed help level the playing field for these kids. In a national survey of 10th graders, students from high-income families were twice as likely to spend five or more hours per week in extracurricular activities. So that shows that students from more affluent families are spending more time engaged in afterschool opportunities. This is significant because students who spent time in extracurricular activities were six times less likely to drop out of school by senior year, two times less likely to be arrested by senior year and seventy-five percent less likely to smoke cigarettes or to use drugs. So if we can get afterschool programs available for all of our children, then we can see some of these outcomes improve for children across all demographic and income levels. Another interesting statistic is that afterschool programs actually can save taxpayer money. This is a great statistic to use in your community and with elected officials. There have been a couple of different studies done on this, and estimates range from \$3.00 to \$12.00 saved for every dollar that's invested in afterschool. So the more conservative estimates only look at a few factors. The more generous estimates look at what could be saved, for example, if a small number of these kids didn't end up incarcerated. What were the tax dollars saved there?

For example, the office of juvenile justice says that preventing just one adolescent from a life of crime can save up to \$1.8 million. So thinking about what it would cost to provide afterschool for that child is much, much less than that \$1.8 million. So there are studies out there that are showing that this is actually a good taxpayer investment strategy. So overall we know that quality afterschool can really make a difference in a community from Los Angeles, the L.A.'s Best Program in Los Angeles to the Afterschool Corporation's afterschool programs in New York City and tons and tons in between. High quality afterschool programs are finding that afterschool makes a difference in keeping kids safe and helping working families and in improving academic achievement. Parents say that afterschool helps them balance work and family life so they're not as concerned during the afterschool hours about where their kids are and what they're doing and who they're with and what they're getting themselves into, and they can focus more on the work that they're doing. Students are missing less school, are getting better grades, are

improving their social skills. And students are less likely to drop out and to go on to further education. And in fact, afterschool can actually make communities and schools more desirable places to live. For example, one of the afterschool corporation studies in New York City found that parents are actually choosing schools based on whether or not the school has an afterschool program available for students attending that school. So programs can make, not just a difference during the afterschool hours, but a difference in the community and the people who are attracted to that community at large.

I wanted to talk a little bit with you about—so we know why afterschool is important. We know that quality afterschool can make a difference in a community. But what do we know about how we help ensure quality afterschool. And there are a couple of groups who have looked at the common elements of successful afterschool programs. And these are not earth shattering ideas. These are things that go into any effective program, and probably go into effective Neighborhood Network centers and things that you're already doing. For example, some of it is just the organizational stuff, that you have goals. You have strong management. You have a sustainability plan that's in place so you're reaching out to other organizations for funding so that you're not overly reliant on one organization. That you have strong staffing. There are clear roles for the staff in your organization. There's an administrator. There are qualified tutors working with kids. There are folks who can provide enrichment activities for kids during the afterschool hours whether it's pottery or karate or some arts and theater group. Whatever the interests are of the kids in your community, you have staff who can help meet those interests. That you have volunteers or you can find ways to recruit volunteers and keep your staff-to-student ratio low. You want to make sure the kids are really getting some individualized attention during the afterschool hours because too often they spend their school hours in large, large classrooms that aren't able to really connect with staff in the way that you would hope they would be able to. So you want to be able to keep those group sizes small.

You want to make sure you're paying attention to safety and to health and nutrition. If we're making the argument that afterschool programs keep kid safe, then we better make sure that, in fact, afterschool programs do keep kids safe. So you have a safe place

for kids to be. If needed, you have transportation issues addressed so the kids can get to and from the program without traveling through unsafe neighborhoods they're dealing with, scary transportation issues. And the kids are getting their nutritional needs met. This is a big deal for programs. One of the first things kids want to do as soon as they get out of school is get something to eat. They're starving. So you want to make sure that there's some way that you're able to provide a healthy snack for kids during the hours after school. Effective partnerships with other organizations in your community are crucial to providing an effective afterschool program. So you want to talk with the schools, with other community-based organizations, like YMCA's or Boys and Girls Clubs or the 4-H or Junior Achievement or anybody else who's working in your community, with juvenile justice, with law enforcement and with other youth-serving agencies to bring them all in on an afterschool partnership so that you can use some of your community resources effectively.

You want to make sure you have strong involvement of families and not just families, meaning adults, but also strong involvement of the youth. So that youth feel like they have some say in what happens during their afterschool program. Make sure you have enriching learning opportunities, offer a wide variety of opportunities, offer tutoring to help kids meet their academic goals, try and make some connections to the school days. There's lots of things that can be done around enriching learning opportunities. You want a challenging environment but an environment where kids feel safe and feel free to explore new learning avenues that they may not have time to explore during their regular school day.

And then you want to make sure you're evaluating your program against all of the things that you've said are your goals in the first place. So set up your goals and then figure out your activities that help you meet those goals and then make sure you have an evaluation that actually measures against the goals that you've set up in the first place. If you measure against something other than your goals, then your evaluation is not going to be good. You need to make sure that you keep all of those things aligned as you move forward. So those are a few ideas about how you help ensure quality. There are lots of resources out there about what makes a quality afterschool program. There are groups like the National School Age Care Alliance and the National Institute on Out of School Time that who focus on quality indicators and have standards for out-of-school time and lots of groups working on

these issues and resources that are available to you.

I want to point out that just about everything that I've said so far on this call can be found on the Afterschool Alliance Web site, which is www.afterschoolalliance.org. So that's all one word, no hyphen between after and school. And links to some of the organizations that I've mentioned—groups like Fight Crime, Invest in Kids, who really look at the law enforcement angle and how programs keep kids safe—the Insacker Group, the NIAST Group, all of those groups can be linked to from our Web site. So it's a good starting point for some resources on afterschool.

And then finally I just want to talk a little bit about what can you do to help support afterschool programs. And we started, just this year, the Afterschool Alliance started a campaign that we're calling Afterschool Is Key. And it's an action campaign that was actually created in response to some budget cuts that were proposed at the federal level. And then subsequently we found that there have been lots of cuts proposed at both state and local levels. So we tried to come up with something that everybody could get engaged with to help make sure that programs aren't closing as the demand for programs continues to grow. So we're trying to balance those two factors. We've created some tools that are on our Web site, things like postcards and events that you can get involved in. So one of the easiest things that you can do is to call or write or fax your member of Congress or the White House. Now is a great time to try and influence the White House as they prepare budgets for next year. You can also get involved in something that the Alliance does every year, called Lights on Afterschool. And Lights on Afterschool is the only nationwide event celebrating afterschool programs and their roles in the lives of children, families and communities. So this is an event that we hold every year. We actually don't hold an event. We organize a national day, and everybody locally holds events because locally is really where the important work happens. Your voices are the voices that members of Congress, that the President, that any policymakers will listen to more so than some advocacy organization in Washington, D.C. So our role is really to give you opportunities and tools and resources to help make your voices heard. And Lights on Afterschool is one of those opportunities. This year it was on October 9th. Next year it will be on October 7th. And there are lots of materials, again, on our Web site about how you can get involved in Lights On. This year was the first

year that we began partnering with Neighborhood Networks. We did an event here in the Washington, D.C. area with a group called Kids on Line, Nortel Networks Kids on Line. And I think some of the Neighborhood Networks have been involved with that organization. And we hosted—well, Kids on Line hosted an event and partnered with us, and we invited some of the local D.C. area neighborhood networks to either attend the event or participate remotely via Web cast. So that was an exciting first collaboration with the Neighborhood Networks. And we're hopeful that next year we can get a lot more of the Neighborhood Networks involved in Lights on Afterschool. You can invite policymakers to visit your Neighborhood Networks center or your afterschool program at your center. There are a lot of things that you can do locally to help influence the decision-makers and the policymakers in this country. We would love—like I said, we would love to get more of the Neighborhood Networks into our network of advocates for afterschool. And you if link to our Web site, you can sign up to receive an electronic newsletter that we do called the Afterschool Advocate, which is an e-mail newsletter that gives you lots of tools, sample letters, important information about funding and upcoming conferences and all sorts of events. So please check out the Web site, get in touch with us. We'd like to connect with you and see what kind of work we can do together. And it's been great talking to, I guess, all of you. And I look forward to your questions later on in the call.

Ms. Schachter:

Thank you so much, Jen. I was really quite stunned with some of the statistics that you provided and quite amazed particularly the dollar savings that society and American society accrues if you spend money on afterschool programs versus incarcerating a youth. That really is a chilling amount of money. Our next speaker is Lynn Smarte. Lynn is the marketing coordinator for ED Pubs.

Ms. Smarte:

Hi. As Vickie said, my name is Lynn Smarte, and I work on the U.S. Department of Education's Education Publication Center. That's the full name for ED Pubs. You can contact ED Pubs to order free copies of publications that are produced by the Department of Education. And what Vickie asked me to do was to check and see what's available from ED Pubs on afterschool programs. So I've located four publications. First, what I'll do is give you the phone number and the Web site address for ED Pubs and you can place an order for any of these publications either by phone or through the Web site online ordering system. The phone

number for ED Pubs is 1-877-4ED-Pubs. And the numerical version of the phone number is 1-877-433-7827. And I will just put in a brief plug that there are hundreds, if not a couple of thousands, publications in ED Pubs, a lot of wonderful resources, all of which are free. So in addition to the ones on afterschool programs that I'll mention briefly here, you might want to search the ED Pubs Web site on reading or math or any issue of interest to you related to education and see what else is there. The Web site address for ED Pubs to place an order is www.edpubs.org.

And here are the four publications that are on afterschool programs. The first one is in Spanish, and I apologize that I don't speak Spanish so I'm going to read you the title in English. In English, it's Afterschool Programs, Keeping Children Safe and Learning. And the description is, this publication discusses the importance of safe and enriching afterschool learning opportunities for children and youth. The booklet explains what works in afterschool programs and provides resources and examples of communities with strong afterschool programs. This is a 20-page booklet, and its order number is EE0448P. And again that one is the one that I will mention that is actually in Spanish. The second one is an Afterschool Action Kit, but I happened to be checking the Afterschool Alliance web site and noticed that they have the Afterschool Action Kit available. And I have a feeling we can maybe ask in the question/answer session, ask Jen to clarify this. But I have a feeling the Afterschool Action Kit that's available through the Afterschool Alliance is a newer version. So I'm not going to give you the details on that right now. The third publication is called Working for Children and Families, Safe and Smart Afterschool Programs. This publication updates an earlier resource guide, which was called Safe and Smart, Making the Afterschool Hours Work for Kids. It includes the most recent research, resources and information on promising afterschool programs. It's designed to provide motivation for superintendents, principals, parent leaders, communities, employers, local governments and faith communities to start up or expand afterschool programs. This one is nice because it's a lot of information. It's 87 pages. And you can order up to 10 copies. The I.D. number or the ordering number for this one is EE0422P. And the last one I'll mention is a brief brochure, but it has a lot of information packed into it. It's called Afterschool Programs, Give Us Wings, Let Us Fly, Communities and Schools Working Together. And much like the others except in a very condensed

format, it describes the benefits of afterschool programs, explains where to find them in your community, indicates what to look for in a quality afterschool program, describes a few sample programs that are making a difference and provides contact information for organizations involved in afterschool programs. Again, this is a small folded brochure. And you can order up to 10 copies of this brochure. The publication ordering number is EE0346P. And that's all I have from ED Pubs. I will tell you how to order the Afterschool Action Kit if Jen thinks that that's a good idea. But I think she may say that there's a more recent one available from the Afterschool Alliance. Thank you.

Ms. Schachter: Well, thanks, Lynn. It was remarkable to find out that ED Pubs had all of these resources and particularly the four resources that you mentioned that all of our neighborhood network centers could easily access and obtain. And we really appreciate you being available for this call. Our third and final speaker is Terri Taylor. She is the center director for the Coleman-James Learning Center in what I understand is sunny Pasadena, California.

Ms. Taylor: You're absolutely right. It is sunny. It's a beautiful day. And I would like to thank you for inviting me to participate on this conference call.

Ms. Schachter: Thank you.

Ms. Taylor: The Neighborhood Networks Coleman-James Learning Center, is located in the city of Pasadena, State of California. It has been in operation since 2001. And the center is about 5,000 square feet. It's a big center. And I know that's not usually the space that you have for a Neighborhood Networks center, but we are very fortunate to have that large space. We have computer labs. We have two computer labs with 13 computers in each one of them. We have four computers in our library. We have a library as well, which is great. We've got classrooms, and we break them up into groups. And we also have a large hall, which the kids are also broken up into different groups as well. We have—in each one of the classrooms, we have research computers so the kids—when they have questions and they need the answer, they need to research, they're able to go right over and access the computer and research the information, along with, of course, the instructor. We have a coordinator—I have one coordinator, and I have six instructors and tutors. The Neighborhood Networks program

serves Community Arms Apartment Complex and the surrounding communities. In the complex, we have 133 units. And we have 395 residents. We have about 95 children, ages 6 to 12 years old and 35 teens, between the ages of 13 to 18. And out of that 95 group that's ages 6 to 12, about 50 of the children attend the Neighborhood Networks afterschool program. And about 10 to 15 of the teens participate and use the center for research or to type their papers, to use computers and get assistance from some of the instructors. Of the 50 students that are registered, 26 are girls and 24 are boys. We have—our demographics are pretty exciting. We have an opportunity to have 55% Afro-American and 43% Latino, and we have 2% Asian. And about 45% of our students do come on a daily basis for homework assistance.

This is a housing development. This is a housing development that has all of the problems that, with an undeserved group, at-risk kids, with the drugs, abuse, you name it, we've got it there. We have parents and single parent homes, a lot of single mothers raising children. And they have a lot of problems. So we provide them with an opportunity of a safe haven with the Neighborhood Networks center. And to help them with their homework because their parents are not able to help them with their homework. And most of our candidates—instructors are from Pasadena City College Job Placement Center. And all of our candidates must pass the tutor test in basic math, language arts and have prior experience or desire to work with children. At this time, we have about five volunteers. And some of those volunteers are residents. So we're really fortunate that some of the residents do get involved with the Center and have a concern about the children. The parents are very appreciative of the Center because we make sure that the parents are included in what we're trying to do and help the children in their academic enrichment and studies.

We have an opportunity—what we have is a certified literacy specialist. So we do offer a one-on-one homework assistance program. And these children learn to read out loud, read silently, writing, practice spelling and vocabulary, and to work or play on the computer. Some of the programs that we offer in addition to that are beginning Word, beginning Windows, Excel, PowerPoint.

We have ESL classes. We have citizenship prep class. We also have for our senior citizens golden years. We have dance classes. We have exercising class. We have music. We have drill team. We have art, boy scouts, girl scouts. We also—for our young men,

we have a new leadership program. It's a program that's actually located in the city of Los Angeles, but this group of young leaders, professional men, mentor our young men. We have that opportunity that's afforded us with true partnership. In order to sustain the programs, you have to develop partnerships. As Jen mentioned, she's given us a lot of good information. She's got a Web site that I would just echo please go on her Web site. It sounds like she's got a lot of resource information as well as Lynn. And how-to with the organization.

A partnership that you develop with community colleges, with libraries, with other youth programs that may offer the programs that you have need of, and some of them don't have a large space, so don't have a space to actually implement these programs, but they receive funding. They'll be more than happy to work with you and to provide you with their services, such as the citizenship and ESL classes. That comes from the California literacy program. We partner with them. We provide them with a site and a captive audience. And they come in and they run the class. We also have a partnership with the police department. We have a partnership with our financial institutions, Washington Mutual office program, as well as Bank of America. You've got your local TV stations. You tap into those resources. They have programs that they offer as well and radio stations, and YMCA. And I don't want to just continue to go over the entire list that Jen's already mentioned, but she's mentioned a lot of opportunities that you can all tap into. And those are funding resources. They're not actual dollars that you receive. Some of them may not be. They're in-kind. So in-kind partnerships are very valuable in sustainability of a Neighborhood Networks program. We receive funding from Northwest Pasadena Development Corporation who—they also were the founders of the organization, Coleman-James Learning Center. So we receive funding, actual dollars, from that organization. But you also have to learn how to, of course, bring in someone that can write a grant for you or to be able to write grants yourself and seek other funding for your specific need and your program. Programs are good. The programs alone, they don't help people. They don't change people. People change people. So I think it's important that you—the people that you bring in to work with your kids in your afterschool program or whatever program that you're going to provide in the Center, that they have training. We work with the Frostic Center, and our instructors are trained by the Frostic

Center. And some of the topics include managing and motivating children, effective tutoring techniques and reading techniques. We hope to gain valuable information from our instructors going and learning this so that they can come back and provide our students with what they need and be able to better teach the kids and to be able to facilitate it. And a lot of the kids, the students that we have working there. We have about three of them that are—actually live in the residence. And we've seen such a vast turnaround when you hire the students that actually are the tutors that actually live in the residence and train them. They have such self-esteem. They feel so good about themselves. And they're better mentors. And they really make a difference by living in the complex and working with the children. Have I covered enough?

The evaluations are important. You have to evaluate your program, evaluate the students that are being trained and evaluate your instructors. And you have to just be very consistent about what it is your goals are. And once you evaluate it and see if you're actually hitting some of those goals and that your outcome is what you want and what your expectations are for the program. We've been fortunate to have the partnership with the Neighborhood Networks and be a part of the Neighborhood Networks program. In the beginning we did have—received a grant, a couple of grants from the HUD. Opportunity wrote the grants, we did receive the funding. But those funds go away and then the program can go away unless you seek other funding and develop other partnerships because the program is only sustained by having partnerships and additional funding. And I guess that's all I have to say right now. I'm going to pass this back to Vickie.

Ms. Schachter:

Thank you, Terri. That was really impressive. I wish I could get on a plane and come out and see the Coleman-James Learning Center. It really sounds lovely and spacious and very dynamic. We'd now like to ask conference participants if they have any questions.

Operator:

At this time, I would like to remind everyone, if you would like to ask a question, please press star, then the number two [sic] on your telephone keypad. We will pause for just a moment to compile the Q&A roster. Your first question comes from Mark Kane.

Mr. Kane:

Hi. My question is for Jen with the Afterschool Alliance. Our afterschool programs in our public housing sites are in real danger of closing, the elimination of RDEG grant money that funded these

sites. Are there any other avenues through HUD or any other organizations that you are looking at for replacement funding?

Ms. Rinehart: One of the funding sources that we've been working pretty closely with and had just opened up to organization to community based and other kinds of organizations outside of school systems is something called The 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program.

Mr. Kane: Yeah, we've actually applied for those.

Ms. Rinehart: That's another one unfortunately that's also threatened by some budget cuts. This is something that's going on at every level of funding. I mean it's one of the most important reasons we think for mobilizing local communities to really speak out about the value of programs so that we can see the funds increase. What kind of funding did you say that you had?

Mr. Kane: We had a DEG drug-elimination grant through HUD. So it was actually cut out of the federal budget.

Ms. Rinehart: Yeah, I would definitely recommend that you check out our web site and that you start getting our newsletter, which does have different funding opportunities listed as they come along. And if you want to call and talk more specifically about some ideas, I'd be happy to do that as well.

Mr. Kane: Okay, I'd love that. How do I contact you?

Ms. Rinehart: And this goes for anybody on the call. If you want to send an e-mail to the Afterschool Alliance at info@afterschoolalliance.org and that can be about requesting the Action Kit that Lynn was talking about. I do think that we have an updated version of that. So if you want an Action Kit, you can send e-mail asking for that. If you'd like a call back from somebody to talk about whatever issues you might be facing locally, you can send that request to the info@afterschoolalliance.org. And we'll send those requests around to various staff members and somebody can get back in touch with you, if it's kind of a real detailed thing that you don't want to bring up on the call today.

Mr. Kane: Thank you.

Mr. Rinehart: You're welcome.

Operator: Again, I would like to remind everyone in order to ask a question, please press star, then the number 1 on your telephone keypad. Your next question comes from Rodney Hatfield.

Mr. Hatfield: Yes, I just wanted to know if the Coleman-James has a web site.

Ms. Taylor: No, we don't have web site. We're actually working on one right now at this time as a matter of fact. So we hope to have it up and running before the end of the year.

Mr. Hatfield: Okay, thank you.

Operator: Your next question comes from Ernesta Walker.

Ms. Walker: Yes, good afternoon. I would like the representative from the Coleman-James Learning Center. How do you find and retain interested parents to volunteer and assist with the program? I try to meet the parents when they come in and create a welcoming environment. But to keep them interested and helping us with the children, I was just wondering if you had any insights and thoughts.

Ms. Taylor: We give the parents an incentive as well. The Center can't operate without support. And what we do is make it mandatory that they give so much time and hours to support the program. And once you get them in there, they find out that they're really enjoying it. So it makes it easier. They look forward to coming in and giving time. And that's one of the ways that we do it.

Ms. Walker: Is that on like a contractual basis? How much time are they to give?

Ms. Taylor: When you have registration, we send out fliers. And we have the parents come in and register the students. And at that time, in order for your kids to attend and to participate, we tell them that they need to volunteer. We need their volunteer support. So we give them an opportunity to give five hours, ten hours out of a month. And you get each parent—if you get the parents to commit to supporting the program at that number, you will get some support. And they find out that they really enjoy it.

Ms. Walker: Thank you.

Operator: Your next question comes from Laura Blackfeather.

Ms. Blackfeather: Hi. I actually have two questions. Is it okay to ask them both now?

Ms. Schachter: Of course.

Ms. Blackfeather: Okay. My first question is regarding the Afterschool Alliance web site, and I know you mentioned that there is a place to actually access links. And I am on the site right now and can't find that. Can you just quickly tell me what—how to navigate towards your links page?

Ms. Rinehart: Okay, are you looking for something in particular or are you just looking for some links to other organizations?

Ms. Blackfeather: Well, that as well as maybe eventually once we get our Web site going, actually linking to your site. So just information in general on links, how to access links that are there and then I guess I can always e-mail you in terms of when we're ready to actually link our page.

Ms. Rinehart: Yeah. And we're always happy to have links from local programs to the Afterschool Alliance so that's easy to do. For example, if you want to look under research on our Web site—if you're on the site right now, if you click on research at the top, you'll see one of the drop-down things has research links. There are a couple of different places where we have links to other organizations. If you click on different areas, it will take you to links that are relevant to that area.

Ms. Blackfeather: Okay. So they're just embedded in each different category—

Ms. Rinehart: Exactly.

Ms. Blackfeather: --within the site. Okay. I just didn't really have too much opportunity to explore. So I'm used to seeing like a links section on the left scroll bar. So anyway, thank you for your time on that question. My other question was directed towards the Pasadena—the Learning Center in Pasadena, California. I'm wondering if your program is set up to where the kids actually sign up for a certain time that they're in the Center and they need to stay in the

Center, or can they come and go—since it is located inside the—of the housing complex. Are they allowed to leave the Center or how do you work the logistics of that particular component?

Ms. Taylor: When we sign each one of the children up, we notify the parents—we find out from the parents if they're going to be home. If the parents are going to be home and the child finishes their homework assignment and they've already gone in and they've selected a book and they've had their reading time, and they sign out from their reading time, then if it is on their information and their registration form, we know that child—because all the instructors know their children. They know that they can then be released and go home. Then if they're smaller, they're actually escorted to their home. So either they stay or they're escorted or they will have to stay until the end of the—until 6:00 or 6:30, and then they're released.

Ms. Blackfeather: Okay, great. We're just getting started here. So thank you. That was one key component that sort of crucial in our program planning. So—

Ms. Taylor: It's finding out if the parents are going to be home. If they're going to be home and they want their child to be released or if they're going to come over and pick them up or we're going to have someone to escort the child home and/or they will stay until the end, and the parents will come and pick up the child.

Ms. Blackfeather: Great. Thank you so much.

Operator: At this time there are no further questions.

Ms. Schachter: Well, I do have a question. So if I may, I'd like to direct this to both Jen and Terri. Does anybody have any national statistics on what the cost per hour per child is for the provision of afterschool programs?

Ms. Rinehart: Well, from our end we often site a statistic from the U.S. Department of Education, again from that 21st Century Community Learning Centers program, which is approximately \$700 per child per school year. We actually think that when you look at that cost compared to what some other providers say it really costs to fund a program that that cost cited by the Department of Education is on the low side. What's not factored into that statistic are the

contributions that come from local partners. That's purely just the government money that goes to support those. So I think that a figure of more like \$1500 is probably more realistic for the cost per school year to provide afterschool care per child. And Terri, you can weigh in perhaps with what it cost at your Center.

Ms. Taylor:

I would agree with the \$1500 per child. I think that \$700 per child is definitely on the low side. And if it is \$700 per child, you're not providing them with adequate support and training, instructors. Because we do pay—we pay our instructors. And we also provide a snack for our children as well. And the volunteers when they have programs, they need materials. If you have dance classes, you need materials. If you have exercising classes, you need mats and pads. So it—and for children, if you're talking about just the afterschool, you need materials. You have to provide them with the listening devices, the headsets, all of the additional materials that are needed to educate your children. And those funds, you need money in order to do that. It just doesn't happen.

Ms. Schachter:

I have another question. And I address it to all three of our presenters, Lynn, Terri and Jen. Are there any examples that you can provide of businesses in the community or in the geographic locale that have provided funds for afterschool programs? My thought being that employers would be interested in having their employees' children safe—in a safe place so that the employee can concentrate on work and not be concerned about the whereabouts of their children during that critical period of time in the afternoon.

Ms. Rinehart:

I know that there's a group called Abbott Laboratories, which is—I believe it's in the Chicago area, that has really pretty heavily invested in afterschool programs. There's a coalition of—coalition might not be exactly the right word. But there's a group of businesses who have joined something called Corporate Voices for Working Families. And this is, again, a group of businesses that have said that there are a few issues around children and families that are important to them and that they're going to actively support. So there's a whole list of businesses that have joined that organization and that are taking some effort to make sure that there's universal pre-K, preschool services, afterschool services. They're concerned about elder care and some of the issues in dealing with grandparents and aging family members. So there definitely are businesses that are concerned about providing afterschool. I think it's less likely for a business to directly

provide afterschool than it is for a business to support an organization that's providing afterschool in the community where that business is based. And Terri probably has some examples of even some minor contributions that businesses might be making to her program. They often donate supplies or sometimes help find volunteers or help with a special event at the Center or something like that. So Terri, I don't know if you have anything from a local angle on that.

Ms. Taylor:

Not actual hard dollars. Now, you can get—you can do fundraisers and you can have an open house and invite your local businesses in to see the different type of work that you're—you know, see the work that the kids are doing in the school—in your afterschool programs, and solicit for funding at that time. Or you can do a breakfast and solicit for funding. And if you're connected with the Chamber of Commerce, you can get all the local businesses in your area and invite them to a breakfast or a lunch or some events that you'd like to put on. Just have the children there to give a testimony or talk about how this has affected your life, and you're able to solicit and get some funding that way as well. It's very tough fundraising. And in order to be an executive director and administrator, you really do need some fundraising skills or you bring someone in who's a developer—fund developer. But it is—it's very necessary to partnership and to try and get as much in-kind as you possibly can.

Ms. Schachter:

Latasha, do we have any further questions?

Operator:

Again, if you would like to ask a question, please press star, then the number 1 on your telephone keypad. Your next question comes from Rodney Hatfield.

Mr. Hatfield:

Yes, I just had a question on the ratios, that is the best ratio between employer and the students there, or even volunteer to students. What's the best ratio that would work amongst—like how many kids? How many kids is the best or one-on-one, you know, the ratio?

Ms. Taylor:

The best ratio is one to three. You might find yourself with one to five, is stretching it. And what we do with our certified literacy specialist is that she works in the library. And so what we do is identify the students who need—have a special need. And we send those kids in one at a time, so there's a one-on-one with her. And

she works with them. But the ratio, if you don't have staffing, usually ends up to 1:5. It's stretching it.

Ms. Rinehart: I think that also depends on what the goal is of whatever activity you have children engaged in. So some activities are more intensive and demand more one-on-one type of attention, where you would want like a 1:3 ratio. In other cases you can have some slightly larger groups. I often see groups of like 1:10 cited for different kinds of activities. But I think—and it depends on age groups too and what age of children you're talking about. So there are a lot of factors that come into play there, in terms of what ratio is desirable. What is the desired outcome? And how old are the kids? And what's their skill level, etc. But I think 1:3 for real direct kind of intervention and real academic tutoring kinds of things is probably a good number and then for less structured, more open activities, you could have something that's more like 1:10. There's another Web site actually that might be useful to some folks. It's just afterschool.org, so it's just like our Web site minus the alliance. And they have some promising practices listed there that always lists the staff ratio of the activity taking place. So if you're curious about what other people are using for staff ratios, that might be an interesting site to check out.

Mr. Hatfield: Yeah, I've been on that Web site before. I haven't seen that yet. So I'll go look for that. I have one other question. When you were talking about the Afterschool Alliance that there may be a link there to get, has something to do with sample funding letters or anything like that, was that what I heard?

Ms. Rinehart: Yes, there are something—well, you're looking like a sample funding letter, like you need to request of a funder?

Mr. Hatfield: Funder request, yes.

Ms. Rinehart: You know, I'm not sure. We have sample letters like to do outreach to policymakers.

Mr. Hatfield: Okay, but that type stuff too though.

Ms. Rinehart: Yeah, that's definitely there under a section of our Web site called advocacy. We have a whole section that's called program tools. And there are program tools for funding. There are program tools for advocacy. And then there are program tools for doing outreach

to the media to help bring attention to your programs. So I would start there. There are definitely sample letters for doing outreach to policy makers and outreach to the media. I'm not sure if there are sample-funding letters. But I can check and see. I just can't remember.

Mr. Hatfield: Thanks for your answers. Appreciate it.

Operator: Your next question comes from Karen Hepler.

Ms. Hepler: Hello. In some of the other telephone conferences, we've gotten copies of the list of people online and also a list of, like minutes, or the information that was covered, including the Web sites and things because sometimes they're not real clear when we're trying to listen to it over the phone. Will you be doing that for this conference?

Ms. Schachter: Well, Karen, I'm so glad that you asked that question. Effective as of our new contract year at Neighborhood Network, the audio of this conference will be going up on the Neighborhood Networks Web site as will a verbatim transcript.

Ms. Hepler: Great. Thank you.

Operator: Your next question comes from William Otero.

Mr. Otero: Hello. I wanted to quickly thank all three of you ladies for all of the information that you've given us today on the conference call. My question is geared more toward the community outreach aspect of the afterschool program. I have recently, in collaboration obviously, with INCO put together one of the first of our Neighborhood Network Centers here in Baby Hunter's Point in San Francisco. I have gotten a tremendous—just a tremendous return from the kids here in the community. I average anywhere between 10 to 15 youth in the computer resource learning center between the hours of 4:00 and 7:00 p.m. in the evening. I can't retain them. They show up and a lot of them just want to surf the Internet. They do come with homework and I ask that they complete their homework first before they go on a computer because I only have 10 computers. But with that said, I guess I'm looking for direction as to—I'm going to check out all of the Web sites that were offered on today's call. I'm going to do more research. But I have contacted like the YMCA in the area. I've

also contacted several non-profit organizations. But given budget restraints and cutbacks, everyone basically is just looking for a paycheck to be blunt about it. A lot of the non-profit organizations that I've contacted are in it basically for, "Well, what can INCO give us for us to help you guys?" So I guess how to work around that. Can any of you three ladies give me an idea of how I can maybe get the services up here without having to cut these astronomical amounts of money just to get them to come up here?

Ms. Taylor:

This is Terri. I can address that. If you—what I would do if I were you, I'd try and find out if there is a technology school or college in your area. The students are looking for somewhere to do their internships. And I would just give them a call. Give the person who runs the school or the college, go in, see the Dean, go in and see whoever it is that you need to talk to regarding putting a flyer up or giving the information to one of the instructors in the classroom and see if that person will pass it out. And then you'll be able to solicit for—or let them know that they can come and do their internship at your site. If you're looking for a specific—if you're looking for a technology instructor--is that what you're asking?

Mr. Otero:

And what if, in general, for the—like the afterschool programs, things that can help—I'll give you a perfect example. I've got an 11th grader with like an 8th grade reading and comprehension level right now. So he comes in and he just wants to learn more about reading. I've done the Mavis Beacon. I've got Mavis Beacon typing. I've got really good programs running on the systems. But I cannot locate—to date, I have been unsuccessful locating volunteers in general. This includes the parents to come in and participate in the afterschool program. And I guess more direction towards ideas of motivating them, motivating the parents to come in and really help their kids because the kids are coming. The youth are here. My challenge more is getting the volunteers, the instructors.

Ms. Taylor:

Senior citizens. If you've got a senior citizen center, you can post a flier and solicit there because you may have some retired schoolteachers. And again back to the community colleges or universities, you can solicit for—to ask them if they can talk with someone there to find out who's in child development because, you know, individuals who are studying to become teachers themselves or their taking child development courses, they can do

an internship and give the time, and you give them the hours and the place and the captive audience. And that's what they're looking for. But you've got to actually get out there yourself and go after the folks and explain to them the opportunity that you're going to provide them with and get them to understand that.

Mr. Otero: Thank you very much for the information. I will keep on pounding the pavement. I've contacted like the local community colleges, and I get a lot of "Great idea. You've got everything going on out there." But I just can't get them to show up. And given the area, it's Hunter's Point, so it's notorious for high crime, high violence. But it's a good thing. It's a really good thing that I have going on out here. And I will keep on pounding the pavement to see if I can—someone is going to give eventually.

Ms. Taylor: They will. They'll come. You just have to be—you just have to keep persevering.

Mr. Otero: Thank you very much.

Operator: Your next question comes from Ollie Taylor.

Ms. Schachter: And then I think we're going to have to cut questions off after that.

Ms. O. Taylor: I can barely hear you guys. But I'm late. I'm looking at the clock wrong. But I'm just joining. I guess I've been on for about 25 minutes. And my question was the promoting investment in afterschool initiative, I was wondering if you have spoken on that issue yet. And if I've missed it, I know I probably missed quite a bit of information. And I'm just wondering if—I want to go back to this young man who just left the telephone line about the above average reader and that he wanted to learn more about reading and he needed—the instructor needed someone to come in and volunteer to help him. I have been very, very successful here lately with putting up flyers at our community college. And I have gotten volunteers. I use the little tear sheets with the telephone number on it. And from one person out of that college brought me three more volunteers who were willing to work with the children in our computer center. So this is my first time even being connected to a conference call. I'm kind of excited about it. And I'm sure that I want to get back on board some more with this. But I think that I've missed basically all of the information that you've indicated on the e-mail that I received, speaking on the quality

afterschool programs and research data and lessons learned about afterschool programs. But I was glad to hear you're going to be putting the minutes up on the Web site. That way I can keep up with it.

Ms. Schachter: Yes, we will.

Ms. O. Taylor: So I guess I've forgotten the question I was going to ask. But anyway, I was wondering about the research data and lessons learned about afterschool programs basically.

Ms. Schachter: Well all of that will be in the transcript that we post to the Web site. That was addressed earlier in the conference call. And it will also be on an audio that you can access from the Web site.

Ms. O. Taylor: Thank you.

Ms. Schachter: You're welcome. I'm sorry that we have to end our call. Our time is up, as Carol Burnette used to say on her television program. Our time is up. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank our three stupendously excellent speakers, Jen Rinehart, Lynn Smart and Terri Taylor. I also want to thank all of our participants for being with us today. Please stay in touch and please tune in next month for our next conference call. Thank you.

Operator: This concludes today's Neighborhood Networks Conference Call. You may now disconnect.